Now 3 ways to get FREE tutoring

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The Learning Center (LC) is excited about offering three ways for Blinn students to get free tutoring for Spring 2007: drop-in-tutoring (DIT), tutoring by appointment (TBA), and group tutoring sessions (GTS). The LC staff will not be teaching or reviewing the material for the course. Make sure to tell your students to bring their textbook and notes, along with the questions they have.

DIT
Drop-In Tutoring

Drop In Tutoring at the Learning Center offers everyone a chance to come by for free tutoring. The tutoring session is usually 10 to 15 minutes in length and is on a first come, first served basis. The LC offers Drop In Tutoring in the following subjects:

- Accounting
- Biology & Chemistry
- French & Spanish
- Geology & Physics
- Math
- COSC 1301, C++, and Java

TBA
Tutoring by Appointment

The tutoring by appointment sessions will be one-on-one with the tutor for 30 minutes. The LC offers the following subjects for Tutoring by Appointment.

- Accounting
- Biology & Chemistry
- French
- Math & Physics

GTS
Group Tutoring Session

The Learning Center conducts one hour, group tutoring sessions for up to 10 students in certain courses.

For details on these new sessions, see our feature story on page 4 of this newsletter.

Learning Center Mission Statement:

The Learning Center exists to help others become independent learners and to help them achieve academic success.

“Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm.” - Samuel Taylor Coleridge
“Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.” - Helen Keller
Kathleen Weber
Tutoring Cyclist
by Kelly Reyna, LCA

For a student needing help in computer science, math, or business classes, Kathleen Weber may be the answer to his/her problems. Kathleen is a computer science major with a math and business minor at Texas A&M, where she also participates in the A&M Cycling Sports Club. Mountain biking is a hobby that Kathleen and her family have enjoyed since they lived in California. When Kathleen was 10, she moved to Sugarland, Texas, and later attended high school in College Station. Upon graduating, Kathleen enrolled in Blinn College as an Information Management major. Kathleen began tutoring at the Learning Center in Spring 2003. During her time at Blinn, Kathleen demonstrated that she was a great student and exemplary tutor. Her success is a result of her superior knowledge of the subject and true love for the job. She enjoys meeting new students and helping them realize that they can achieve academic success on their own. By guiding the student in the right direction and giving them sound advice, Kathleen demonstrates true mentorship. Although she is often challenged by the rigorous demands of school, work, and cycling, she always finds the time to provide quality tutoring to students in need.

"Do one thing every day that scares you.”
- Eleanor Roosevelt

The Learning Center has over 80 online computers with Microsoft Office, Maple, and course software. This service is free to all students, faculty, and staff. Students, faculty and staff can print as well at the Learning Center. Students receive $15.00 from their tuition for printing and faculty/staff are allowed to spend up to $150.00

“Personally, I am always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught.”
- Winston Churchill

Kathleen (right) often races with her sister, Deanna (left). Their love for cycling is evident by the weather conditions they must endure. The photo at right sums it all up........
Group Tutoring Sessions (GTS) to the Rescue
by Kay Bush, LCA

Research supports the positive effects that collaborative learning has on today's community-college students. Professors are introducing group projects and group discussions in the classroom. However, within the timeframe to cover the required curriculum for a course, professors are limited to the amount of engagement that can take place in the classroom. One of the most beneficial collaborative forms of learning is the outside study group. Average exam scores are generally higher for students who study in groups, regardless of the teaching style of the professor (Sokolove & Marbach-Ad, 1999). Since study groups are possible for the majority of community college courses, this collaborative system should be used more often at the community college level.

In hopes of increasing the number of study groups at Blinn College, the Learning Center (LC) on the Bryan campus is conducting group tutoring sessions (GTS) for core subjects that are normally part of the drop-in-tutoring already in place. Learning Center Assistants (LCAs) will be the tutors for the hour-long study groups with a size limit of 10 students. The LCAs will encourage the students to continue the study group outside of the scheduled group session with added pointers and tips for conducting successful study sessions. The LCAs are there to act as a tutor for the group, not to review or teach the material of the course. The study groups will be encouraged to bring questions they have gathered to the LC session.

Below is a list of the GTS offered at the Learning Center for the spring 2007 semester:

- Accounting 2301
- Biology 1406 & 1407
- Chemistry 1411
- Chemistry 1412
- Math 1324
- Math 0312 and Math 1314
- Math 1325 & Math 2414

Schedules for group tutoring sessions are available at the Learning Center and on our website at: www.blinn.edu/labs/bryan/index.htm


NO!
You may not call the Learning Center for help with this problem!

LC Chuckles by Kay Bush

“If you’re enthusiastic about the things you’re working on, people will come ask you to do interesting things.” —James Woolsey, former CIA director
What is a Cognitive Disability?
by Kay Bush, LCA

Look at the letters below and see if you are able to read the phrase:

Tob eornot obe.

Need help? Now make a mental picture of William Shakespeare and rethink the phrase above. There are students that see letters and words in classroom Power Points and textbooks like the jumbled phrase above. All educators have encountered students who seem to take a long time to, or may never, grasp the material. These students may have a cognitive disability, which in broad terms means that the student has greater difficulty with one or more types of mental tasks than the average person. Since there are many reasons for someone having a cognitive disability, educators need to address the functional aspects of the disability. The Center for Persons with Disabilities and Utah State University provide a list of functional cognitive disabilities, which include deficits or difficulties with:

- Memory
- Problem-solving
- Attention
- Reading, Linguistic, and Verbal Comprehension
- Math Comprehension
- Visual Comprehension¹

The listed deficits or difficulties may range considerably in severity, with some students not even knowing they have such a disorder. The Learning Center staff on the Bryan Campus will be undergoing training for how to recognize and help students with cognitive disabilities during the Spring 2007 semester. The Learning Center would like to encourage all faculty and staff to research this topic further for the sake of our students struggling with cognitive difficulties. The Blinn College Office of Disability Services serves students needing special support services and may be able to answer questions you have about cognitive disabilities.

“You are the storyteller of your own life, and you can create your own legend or not.” —Isabel Allende

“"We are what we repeatedly do, Excellence, then is not an act but a habit." - Aristotle
So what ever happens to our students once they leave our campus? Many transfer to A&M and then on to successful jobs and careers.

One of our success stories is Joey Bruns. Joey is a former student of Blinn and became a math and French tutor for the Learning Center in January of 2002. Joey graduated last December from Texas A&M with a BS in mathematics and a BA in French. The double major came after receiving a Study Abroad Fellowship and the International Fee Scholarship. This allowed him to study French for a year in France. He can also boast that he is a licensed pilot!

Joey just recently accepted a position with an oil exploration company, WesternGeco, in Houston, Texas. The company has offices all over the world, one of which is in France. He will be in the Houston office, which is close to his hometown of Victoria, Texas. Joey is now in Norway for an eight week training course.

Even though we miss him dearly at the Learning Center, we wish Joey all the best as he heads for success!

“Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”  -Margaret Mead